AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) An overcurrent protective relay for use in a power system, comprising:

means for obtaining current values from a power line, which values are adjusted for application to a processor; and

a processor ~~for~~ that ~~evaluating~~ evaluates the adjusted current values ~~with~~ against a preestablished response curve, wherein the preestablished response curve includes a combination of (a) an inverse time overcurrent curve portion in which, as fault current increases from a normal current value, the time to trip a circuit breaker for the power line decreases, and (b) a thermal limit curve, wherein the thermal limit curve crosses the time overcurrent curve at a selected current value, such that the thermal limit curve controls the time to trip the circuit breaker for fault current values greater than the preselected current value and the overcurrent curve controls the time to trip for fault current values less than the preselected current value.

2. (Original) The relay of claim 1, wherein the selected thermal limit curve is an I^2t curve.

3. (Cancelled)

4. (Currently Amended) The relay of claim 1, wherein the thermal limit curve includes a feature of producing a trip signal at a selected speed when the current reaches a value which saturates an ~~A/D~~ analog to digital converter portion of the relay.

5. (Original) The relay of claim 1, wherein the time overcurrent curve can be adjusted to change the response of the relay.

6. (New) The relay of claim 1, wherein the thermal limit curve includes a feature of producing a trip signal at a selected speed when the current reaches a value insufficient to saturate an analog to digital converter portion of the relay.

7. (New) A method for tripping an overcurrent protective relay comprising the steps of:

obtaining current values from a power line;

adjusting the values for application to a processor; and

evaluating the adjusted current values against a preestablished response curve, wherein the preestablished response curve includes a combination of (a) an inverse time overcurrent curve portion in which, as fault current increases from a normal current value, the time to trip a circuit breaker for the power line decreases, and (b) a thermal limit curve, wherein the thermal limit curve crosses the time overcurrent curve at a selected current value, such that the thermal limit curve controls the time to trip the circuit breaker for fault current values greater than the preselected current value and the overcurrent curve controls the time to trip for fault current values less than the preselected current value.